

**SUPPLEMENT NUMBER 2**  
**CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT**

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# **GREAT BASIN CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT CALL OUT PROCEDURES**

## **Introduction**

Personnel may experience a critical incident and traumatic stress during the line of duty. The effects of traumatic stress are best prevented and mitigated through the use of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). The use of CISM increases productivity, health, morale, and enjoyment of life. It may decrease post-traumatic stress disorder, acute stress disorder, workman's compensation claims, fatalities, injuries, and suicide.

### **I. Policy**

Critical Incident Stress Management Call Out Procedures provide an organized approach to the management of stress responses for personnel having been exposed to a traumatic event in the line of duty. The establishment of these procedures does not prevent an employee from seeking individual consultation through the Employee Assistance Program or a trained Peer Supporter.

### **II. Authority**

National Wildfire Coordinating Group Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management of 1996 (PMS 926/NFES 1356)

A. BLM Law Enforcement General Order 13 Critical Incident Stress Management.

B. Employee Casualty Guide for Managers and Supervisors.

C. Employee Casualty Guide for Managers and Supervisors.

### **III. Definitions**

**Critical Incident:** Any event which has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of either an individual or group. Critical incidents are typically sudden, powerful events which are outside the range of ordinary human experiences.

**Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD):** A structured group meeting that emphasizes venting or show of emotions and other reactions to a critical incident. It also emphasizes educational and informational elements which are of assistance to employees in understanding and dealing with the stress generated by the event. Debriefings generally occur within 24 – 72 hours of the critical incident.

**Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM):** A wide range of programs and services designed to prevent and mitigate the effects of traumatic stress.

**Critical Incident Stress Management Response:** Resources activated by the CISM Coordinator to respond to a critical incident. Group members may include peer support and mental health professionals.

**Defusing:** This is a shorter and less structured version of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) that usually occurs within a few hours of a critical incident. The main purpose of a Defusing is to stabilize the affected personnel so that they can return to work if necessary or go home without unusual stress. Defusing allow for of initial venting of reactions to the incident and provides stress related information to affected personnel. A Defusing may eliminate the need for a formal CISD or enhance a subsequent CISD.

**Individual Crisis Debriefing:** One-on-one confidential assistance with any issue by trained peer supporter or mental health professional.

**Peer Support:** Personnel trained to assist their fellow employees by listening without judgment and maintaining confidentiality. They are also trained in positive coping strategies for stress, and to help others validate their thoughts and emotions about an overwhelming trauma or loss.

#### IV. Responsibilities

All personnel are responsible for identifying and recognizing significant incidents, which may qualify for CISM response and notifying their immediate supervisor.

##### A. Agency Administrator

###### 1. Identification of Event

The Agency Administrator is responsible for identifying an event as a critical incident. The Agency Administrator is the highest ranking agency line officer with direct responsibility for the personnel involved in the incident. Typical critical incidents capable of causing distress for personnel are identified in Appendix 1.

###### 2. Request CISM

The Agency Administrator or designee is responsible for requesting CISM services from the CISM Coordinator. The CISM Coordinator would decide on the size and make up of the group and place the order with the local Dispatch Center in which the incident occurred. It should be stressed by the CISM Coordinator that the timeliness of the request for a CISM Response is imperative, but to keep in mind that a CISD should occur 24-72 hours after the incident. The reason for this is that the effectiveness of the debriefing is so the individuals involved are prepared to start dealing with the thoughts, emotions and impact of what just transpired. The whole point of CISM is to come in and help the individuals involved deal with the emotional after affects of an emergency.

The date and time of CISM debriefings will be decided in conjunction with the CISM Response Group. Although rapid response is important, the CISM Response Group must have adequate time to respond appropriately.

###### 3. Provide Information

The Agency Administrator or designee is responsible for providing the CISM Coordinator with information about the incident (See appendix 2). The Agency Administrator is responsible for providing the CISM Coordinator with a budget code for expenses associated with CISM response.

## B. Local Dispatch

### 1. Request CISM

If a CISM Response cannot be mobilized at the local level, the local Dispatch Center Manager is responsible for contacting the appropriate Great Basin Coordination Center and requesting CISM services within 1 hour, or as soon as possible, after receiving a request for CISM services from the Agency Administrator.

### 2. Identify a Logistic Support for CISM

When a CISM Response is activated, a person will be assigned to work with the CISM Lead and dispatch to provide logistical support such as rooms, office space, etc.

## C. Great Basin Coordination Centers

### 1. Request CISM

Great Basin Coordination Centers are responsible for contacting the CISM Coordinator and requesting CISM services within 1 hour after receiving a request for CISM services from the local Dispatch Center. In the event the CISM Coordinator or qualified CISM Leader from that area is unavailable, the Great Basin Coordination Center will pass the request on to the other center or the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC).

## D. CISM Coordinator

### 1. Assess Need for CISM & Type of Response

The CISM Coordinator is responsible for assessing the need for CISM and determining the appropriate CISM intervention (i.e. defusing, debriefing, individual consultation, or other support services.)

### 2. Activates CISM Response

The CISM Coordinator in consultation with the Agency Administrator makes the decision to deploy a CISM Response Group. The CISM Coordinator activates members to respond to the incident through normal dispatch procedures. The CISM Coordinator assigns CISM Leader. The CISM Coordinator provides the local Dispatch Center with names and locations of members to be ordered.

### 3. Maintaining the Roster

The CISM Coordinator is responsible for maintaining an on-call roster for all members. The CISM Coordinator will notify the Coordination Center of any changes to the roster or unavailability of members. Coordination Center will also be informed when the CISM Coordinator is unavailable.

## E. CISM Leader

### 1. Acts as Alternate for CISM Coordinator

When the CISM Coordinator is not available, a qualified CISM Leader would assume the responsibilities of the CISM Coordinator described above in Section D. Appendix 3 identifies a list of CISM Coordinators in order of call out.

### 2. Provides Information to CISM Coordinator & GACC

The CISM Leader is responsible for communicating with the CISM Coordinator when a request for CISM is received. The nature of the incident, name of group members, and dates of deployment will be provided to the CISM Coordinator, the appropriate Coordination Center and the ordering dispatch center.

**GREAT BASIN  
CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT  
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**CISM Coordinator**

**Major Duties:**

1. Administers and coordinates the critical incident stress management (CISM) program. Coordinates with the National CISM Lead on program development and available resources.
2. Serves as primary point of contact for requests for CISM support. Responds to requests for CISM by assessing the need and determining the appropriate intervention. In conjunction with the Agency Administrator makes the decision to deploy a CISM Response. Activates members and assigns a CISM Leader to respond to the incident. Makes every effort to include one mental health professional.
3. Updates CISM protocols and operational procedures with GACC's annually.
4. Recruits personnel to become peer support members. Provides training for new recruits and continuous education for group members. Stays abreast of new developments and innovations in the field of crisis intervention.
5. Provides stress education and support programs for personnel.
6. Provides crisis intervention services as needed (i.e. defusing, debriefings). Maintains the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of providing CISM services. Works within level of competence and makes appropriate referrals.
7. Ensures that distressed group members receive the appropriate help (i.e. debrief the debriefers).
8. Selects members and maintains current list of peer support, local and national resources. Provides the list to the National CISM Lead and GACC Coordinators.
9. Maintains records for all trained CISM members.
10. Reviews activities to address quality issues and improve service within the CISM Response Group.
11. Provides outreach to inform agency administrators and employees of CISM services.

## **GACC Coordinator**

### **Major Duties:**

1. Coordinates with CISM Coordinator when a request for CISM is received.
2. Should receive CISM training.
3. Provide necessary logistic support needed for the CISM Response Group.
4. Identify the procurement officers at each center who will assist with the logistical support.

## **CISM Leader**

### **Major Duties:**

1. Provide crisis intervention services as needed (i.e. defusing, debriefings). Maintains the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of providing CISM services. Maintains the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of providing CISM services. Works within level of competence and makes appropriate referrals.
2. Responsible for group's activities when deployed (See appendix 1).

## **Peer Support Members**

### **Major Duties:**

1. Provide crisis debriefing services as needed (i.e. defusing, debriefings). Maintains the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of providing CISM services. Works within level of competence and makes appropriate referrals.
2. Attends CISM training to maintain skills and abilities.
3. Updates peer support nomination/information form on annual basis to reflect current experience, education, and training in crisis debriefing.

**CRITICAL INCIDENTS**

A critical incident is an extraordinary event that overwhelms the usual coping abilities of personnel. The typical critical incidents capable of causing distress for personnel include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Line of duty death
2. Suicide of a co-worker
3. Entrapment
4. Burn-over
5. Significant event involving children (i.e. traffic accident)
6. Knowing the victim of the event
7. Serious line of duty injury
8. Event of a grotesque nature
9. Discovery of a dead body
10. Involvement in several stressful events in a short time frame
11. Perception of serious threat to self
12. Any event that has an unusually powerful impact on personnel

**CISM INFORMATION FORM**

1. What is the nature of the critical incident?
2. When did it occur (date/time)? Is the event ongoing?
3. How many individuals are involved in the incident? What was there level of exposure?
4. Are there distinct groups involved in the incident?
  - a. Work groups
  - b. Cultural groups
  - c. Level of exposure
5. How are individuals reacting to the incident?
  - a. What signs and symptoms of stress are being displayed?
  - b. How long have the symptoms been going on?
6. Are there concurrent stressors?
7. What is the name and phone number of the Agency Administrator or designee requesting CISM?
8. What is the charge code?
9. Has a location for a defusing/debriefing been chosen?



## **CISM LEADER CHECKLIST OF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Prior to Deployment**

1. Obtain information from CISM Coordinator/CISM Leader (Call-out Information Form).
2. Contact Agency Administrator or designee whom requested CISM services and request the following:
  - a. Meeting with Agency Administrator or designee
  - b. Charge Code
  - c. Location for debriefing(s). Ensure location is off-site for group debriefings, quiet and large enough to accommodate number of people.
  - d. Date/time for defusing/debriefing(s). Ensure debriefings are scheduled to allow sufficient time to meet with Agency Administrators and CISM Response members prior to conducting any group debriefings.
  - e. Items that will be needed on site (i.e. photo copier, phones, vehicle, etc.).
  - f. Information on incident not provided on Call-out Information Form such as newspaper clippings or other relevant facts.
  - g. Travel information (i.e. hotel with government per diem rates)
3. Contact CISM Response members to arrange a meeting upon arrival. Relay information about incident, planned debriefings, and travel (Recommend members stay in same hotel to facilitate coordination).
4. Assemble 'Go-Kit'.
  - a. Handouts (i.e. Sign & Symptoms, Stress Management, Grief, etc.)
  - b. Forms (i.e. General Message Form; Unit Log 1214 & CTR 10288)
  - c. Signs – "Do Not Disturb"
  - d. Referral Information (i.e. EAP, local resources)
5. After reviewing the above checklists, there are a few items to keep in mind when preparing for a CISM Response.
  - a. Keep in mind that the checklists are to be utilized as guidelines, nothing is absolute in the list provided. Flexibility is vital in this type of situation and is the key to the success of the outcome.
  - b. Keep in mind that the Agency Administrator, or the person requesting the resource is dealing with many of the aspects of the critical event. Therefore, it may be difficult to get arrangements finalized and preparations for the arrival of the Response Group. It is crucial that the responding CISM Group doesn't create more stress than it prevents.

## **On Site – Preparation**

1. Conduct meeting with Agency Administrator or designee whom requested CISM services to obtain information about the incident\*. Is there a plan B in case mental health care professional is not available?
  - a. Based on information received, determine whether triaging is needed for defusing/debriefings.
  - b. Determine whether supervisor(s) will be included in the group debriefings. Usually only individuals allowed in debriefings are those involved, or it could stifle a good session/debriefing. Determine who is most affected and may need one-on-one consultations. This evaluation should be done by a mental health care professional with input from CISM Response members.
2. Conduct meeting with CISM Response members to provide information about the incident, obtain information about their CISM experience, and plan debriefings. Develop debriefing strategy by addressing the following\*:
  - a. Assign tasks to group members (i.e. stages of debriefing, doorkeeper).
  - b. Determine room arrangement and seating position of the group.
  - c. Based on discussion with Agency Administrator, discuss what to expect and how it will be handled.
3. Assign one-on-one consultations based on group member background/experience\*.
4. Purchase items needed for debriefing (i.e. refreshments, Kleenex).

## **Post Debriefing**

1. Conduct meeting with CISM Response members to discuss group process (i.e. what went well, lessons learned)\*.
2. Determine if group members are 'okay' or if they need to be debriefed\*.
3. Assign follow-up tasks for group members (i.e. one-on-one consultations, phone calls, referral sources, etc\*.)
4. Follow-up with Agency Administrator or designee.
5. Prepare and submit after action report to CISM Coordinator.

\* Responsibilities of the mental health professional when assigned to the CISM Response Group.

## CISM Incident Pre-Dispatch Checklist

Incident Commander \_\_\_\_\_ Agency Administrator \_\_\_\_\_

CISM Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Incident:    Natural Disaster  
                                  Employee Death  
                                  Extended SAR  
                                  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Who is involved: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What occurred: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

When did the incident occur: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident occur: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

How did the incident occur: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Why did the incident occur: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Media involvement in the incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

CISM leader should consider the need for an on site assessment of incident prior to arrival of other group members.

## CISM Response

Response time and commitment of members:

Arrival Date

Departure Date

Response Members:

## Expectations

## Debriefings

## Working with health

care professionals

## Working with outside agencies

No mediation

## One on One's

## Gather/dissemination of information

## Working with families

No fitness for duty  
evaluations

## Logistics

## Phones

Rental Car

Travel

Briefing for incident upon arrival

Current (expected) Weather

## Sleeping Bags

Computer

## Lodging

Account #s

## Copy Machine

## Meals

## Backfill

## Radios

## Work Space

## OT Authorization

## Red Bags

Gear specific to incident

Approximately how many people were affected by the incident?\_\_\_\_\_

Who has been affected by the incident?\_\_\_\_\_

## CONTACT LIST

### Contact person(s) at incident (first arrival).

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

### Liaison with Agency Representative

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

### Other Contacts (Multi-Agency Incident?)

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

Are local CISM resources available?

Y

N

What CISM has been done or planned before CISM Response arrival?

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### CISM Contacts (Multi-Agency Incident?)

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Best contact times \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Pager \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment.

Update Agency Administrator as to assessed needs.

One on Ones	Tailgate Information Sessions	Gather/Dissemination of information
Debriefings	No Mediation	No fitness for Duty Evaluations

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